

EAST PROVIDENCE SCHOOL DEPARTMENT

Martin Middle School

111 Brown Street

East Providence, Rhode Island 02914

March 29, 2005

Open Session

Mr. Antone Gouveia, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. Four members were present: Eileen Lovett, David Medeiros, Mildred Morris and Antone Gouveia. Also present: Mr. Manuel Vinhateiro, Superintendent and Mr. Robert Silva, Esq. and Andrew Thomas, Esq. of Silva Law Group. A motion was made by Mrs. Morris to move to Executive Session in accordance with RI General Laws, Section 42-46-5 (a) (1) Personnel & (a) (2) Litigation, and (a) (8) Student Discipline, seconded by Mr. Medeiros. Roll call vote: Mrs. Lovett, aye; Mr. Medeiros, aye; Mrs. Morris, aye; Mr. Gouveia, aye. (Mr. Robert Faria arrived after the vote).

A motion was made by Mr. Medeiros to close the Executive Session and return to public session at 7:30 PM, seconded by Mrs. Morris. Vote 5-0.

A motion was made by Mr. Medeiros to seal the minutes of the

Executive Session, seconded by Mrs. Morris. Roll call vote: Mr. Faria, aye; Mrs. Lovett, aye; Mr. Medeiros, aye; Mrs. Morris, aye; Mr. Gouveia, aye.

Mrs. Lovett led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag and a Moment of Silence was observed.

Record of Previous Meetings – A motion was made by Mr. Medeiros, seconded by Mrs. Morris to approve the minutes of the February 8, 2005 meeting. Vote 5-0.

Chair's Report

Mr. John Butler, Student Council Liaison to the School Committee presented a report.

Mr. Gouveia commended the Townie newspaper staff and asked that copies be made available at the next School Committee meeting. Mr. Butler commended the newspaper advisor.

Mr. Gouveia commended all who participated in the recent Math workshop and Sports Math Night; the volunteerism has been phenomenal.. Mr. Gouveia spoke about the need to break down the barriers and do a better job of getting teachers and parents together. During the recent emergency at Riverside Middle School, the emergency response plan worked very well and the response team

deserves credit. He also commended the principal and staff at Orlo Avenue School for handling the recent roof emergency; staff handled the situation very well and did a terrific job.

Hearings - None

Reading of Communications - None

Report of Superintendent and Staff

FY 2004-05 Budget Update/Budget Reconciliation- Mr. Vinhateiro advised that the state retirement system crisis would affect all certified and non-certified staff members. When the budget was created for fiscal year 2004-05, our contribution was projected to be 11.4%. We have been notified it will be over 14% effective July 2005. The additional funds were not budgeted; consequently, staff adjusted the budget immediately. The School Committee received a budget reconciliation, which Mr. Vinhateiro reviewed with each member individually. Each department contributed to cuts in various line items in order to make up the difference. Mr. Vinhateiro requested a vote of the School Committee to accept this reconciliation in order to bring the budget in line. Mr. Gouveia asked for verification that all items (expenditures or encumbrances) were included in the statement. Dr. Hilton responded that the statement is complete. Mr. Vinhateiro stated that no cuts were made in the line items for books or libraries; however, until this reconciliation is approved, funds have

been frozen until the various other line items have all been adjusted.

A motion was made by Mrs. Morris to accept the recommendation of the Superintendent for expenditure adjustments in the 2004-05 budget, seconded by Mrs. Lovett. Roll call vote: Mr. Faria, aye; Mrs. Lovett, aye; Mr. Medeiros, aye; Mrs. Morris, aye; Mr. Gouveia, aye.

Personnel Recommendations

Mrs. Diane Rodericks presented the following personnel items:

RESIGNATIONS

**Antonio Gibau Custodian, SHS
End of 2004-2005 school year**

**David Gold Student Liaison, Senior High School
Effective immediately**

Motion: Morris/Second: Medeiros. Vote 5-0.

EXTENDED PERSONAL LEAVE

**Lorraine Rappoport Reading Specialist, Whiteknact
Effective March 7 through end of
2004-2005 school year**

**Sharon Waterman Diagnostic Prescriptive Consultant
Special Services
2005-2006 School Year**

Motion: Morris/Second: Medeiros. Vote 5-0.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE – FAMILY & MEDICAL LEAVE

**Dolores Bliss Teacher Assistant, Silver Spring School
January 24 – April 4, 2005**

Motion: Morris/Second: Medeiros. Vote 5-0.

APPOINTMENTS

Cari Ravo Girls' Track Coach, MMS

Motion: Morris/Second: Medeiros. Vote 5-0.

RESIGNATIONS

**John Gendron Asst. Football Coach, SHS
Effective immediately**

**Joseph Monteiro Asst. Football Coach, SHS
Effective immediately**

Motion: Morris with regret/Second: Medeiros. Vote 5-0.

FAMILY & MEDICAL LEAVE ACT

Rinda Foster (III) Sp Ed, Resource, CTC

March 8 to approx. May 2

Kerrie Avjian (Maternity) Math Teacher, MMS

Approx. May 6, 2005

Motion: Morris/Second: Medeiros. Vote 5-0.

Field Trip Requests

The Superintendent recommended approval of a request from Mr. Walker, Culinary Arts Instructor at the Career/Technical Center for permission for 26 students with six chaperones to attend a culinary tour of Boston on April 13-15, 2005. Motion by Mr. Medeiros to approve, seconded by Mrs. Morris. Vote 5-0. Chef Walker was present to answer questions and explain the details of the trip.

In reference to a request by the Career School Academy of Finance for 25-30 students to participate in an educational field trip to Boston on May 5-6, a motion was made by Mrs. Morris, seconded by Mr. Medeiros to approve for discussion. Mr. Vinhateiro commented that this is only a day trip. Mrs. Morris expressed concerns about the

chaperones staying with the students during the trip. Mr. Rocha was present and explained that the students' time is formalized and the adults will accompany the students at all times. Mr. Gouveia said that although we have not had any problems, he would like chaperones dispersed throughout the bus. Mr. Vinhateiro will check on the number of chaperones, provide their names to the School Committee and send out a letter expressing the feelings of the School Committee regarding placement of chaperones throughout the bus during travel time. After discussion and questions regarding chaperones, it was decided to revisit this issue at the April meeting. No vote was taken.

Facilities Update

Mr. Harry Mutter presented the following report:

- Orlo Avenue School Roof Project – McKenna Roofing reported that the roof is approximately 60% complete; bad weather has caused a slight delay in the schedule.**
- Mr. Vinhateiro will attend a meeting with representatives of Gilbane and the City Manager on Monday, April 4th to develop a game plan regarding capital needs. A survey is being conducted by the City to develop a capital plan for eight to ten years. The first meeting will be to prioritize needs; the goal is for the City to plan for maintenance of buildings on a long-term basis. Mr. Vinhateiro related there would be no cost to the School Department for this survey. Mr. Gouveia**

expressed appreciation for the level of cooperation of the City Council and the City Manager with the Superintendent. Their awareness of what is going on will bode well with the capital improvement plan and certainly makes the School Committee's job easier. Mr. V meets with the City Manager on a regularly basis.

- Signage around school buildings - Mrs. Morris requested that the City be petitioned to change some of the signs around the schools; parents are getting parking tickets while doing school business and she thinks some changes are necessary. Discussion took place about parking at schools. Mrs. Morris felt the Committee should go through the list of signs and try to make changes.**

- Mr. Vinhateiro said that he understood Mrs. Morris' concerns; Hennessey has a unique situation; maybe the signs in close proximity to the building can be changed. Mr. Medeiros asked for recommendations for which signs should be changed. Mr. Vinhateiro will conduct a study and make suggestions for possible changes.**

- Martin Lighting issue – Mr. Mutter researched the issue of adding lights in the parking lot; Mrs. Morris suggested trimming the trees in front of the school, which are blocking the lights.**

- A second set of doors has been installed at Riverside Middle School. These doors have added security as well as an overall improvement in the appearance of the building.**

- Representatives from Gilbane Corporation will be calling to inspect the roofs of Orlo Avenue School and Waddington School.
- The back stairs at Silver Spring School are a problem. Custodian does not have time in the morning to clear the stairs; there are eight doorways that need to be shoveled before the start of school.
- Mr. DeVall, Principal of Martin Middle School, Mrs. Morris and a representative of the PTO met with Mr. Mutter regarding the lighting outside of the building. Mr. Mutter has contacted an electrician who will get back to him with some ideas and costs. The new vertical blinds have been ordered.

Mr. Gouveia advised that he received a letter from a parent regarding smoking at the high school. Mrs. Partington, Vice President of the PTO addressed the School Committee regarding students smoking between classes, especially between the high school and vocational school. Mrs. Morris said she also received a letter and spoke to Mr. Vinhateiro about this issue; the School Committee needs to review the policy and be stricter with it. She is embarrassed about the cigarette butts at the doorways of the school. Students are breaking state law and school policy when smoking. Mrs. Morris asked to have this item placed on the agenda next month; she would like to find out what other schools are doing about it.

Home School Requests – A motion was made by Mrs. Morris to approve a request for home schooling recommended for approval by

Dr. Jacqueline Forbes, Assistant Superintendent, seconded by Mr. Medeiros. Vote 5-0.

School Calendar 2005-2006 – A motion was made by Mrs. Morris to approve the School Calendar for 2005-06 recommended by the Superintendent, Mr. Vinhateiro, seconded by Mr. Medeiros. Vote 5-0.

Report of Sub-Committees – Mr. Medeiros thanked everyone who attended the Family Involvement Workshop held on March 22, 2005. Mrs. Lovett reported that approximately 70 people participated and a first reading of a policy will be presented at the May meeting, with a final copy by June. Mr. Gouveia expressed his appreciation to administrators, teachers, parents and members of the community.

Mrs. Morris reported that a committee has been meeting on a regular basis to formulate a Wellness Policy for the district. Work is nearly completed and a draft policy will be presented for first passage at the May meeting, final approval in June, and hopefully the policy will be in place for September.

Unfinished Business

New Business

Grosvenor Avenue Traffic Flow/Whiteknact School – Mr. Medeiros received concerns from constituents about Whiteknact School. A

motion was made by Mr. Medeiros to make Grosvenor Avenue (southbound) a one-way street (between N. Hull Street and North County) during the hours of 8:00AM-9:00AM and 2:00PM-3:00PM on school days, seconded by Mrs. Morris. He requested that the Superintendent look into this matter with the City. Mr. Vinhateiro will contact the City Manager to request that a traffic engineer investigate the possibility. Roll call vote: Mr. Faria, aye; Mrs. Lovett, aye; Mr. Medeiros, aye; Mrs. Morris, aye; Mr. Gouveia, aye.

Pilot Math Program – In response to a request from Mr. Gouveia regarding information on this topic, Dr. Jacqueline Forbes, Assistant Superintendent and Patti Usenia, math teacher, were present to discuss the pilot program, which is being implemented this spring in Grade 6 at the Middle Schools. Mrs. Morris requested that this program be compared with other programs, and she would like a grade assessment to be completed at the end of the pilot program; otherwise she will not vote for the program.

Class Selection Criteria - Mr. Vinhateiro explained that in order for students to create the best program of studies, it is absolutely necessary to communicate with parents, teachers, and guidance counselors to select the most demanding courses in order to be best prepared for the future.

School Committee Benefits – Mr. Faria requested that this item be placed on the agenda for discussion as he felt that we couldn't afford

to pay benefits. Mrs. Morris stated that some School Committee members and the Superintendent are the only individuals in the City paying 10% toward their health benefits. Mr. Faria said 25 out of 36 school districts do not receive benefits and he feels strongly about the issue. A motion was made by Mr. Faria to eliminate benefits for School Committee members, no second to the motion. Motion failed.

Payment of Bills

Local Operating Bill List:

Warrant #000554 2/28/05 \$1,125,711.30

Motion: Morris/Second: Medeiros. Vote 5-0.

Warrant #000555 3/4/05 \$ 77,563.10

Motion: Morris/Second: Medeiros. Vote 5-0.

Warrant #000560 3/22/05 \$1,262,096.56

Motion: Morris/Second: Medeiros. Vote 5-0.

Federal Bill List:

Warrant #000553 2/28/05 \$ 363,787.53

Motion: Morris/Second: Medeiros. Vote 5-0.

Warrant #000558 3/18/05 \$ 50,938.10

Motion: Morris/Second: Medeiros. Vote 5-0.

Question and Answer Period

Linda Pace spoke about the roof at Orlo Avenue School and the lighting situation. Mr. Mutter reported that he recently had a meeting with RISE and their recommendations are going to be implemented. Mrs. Pace spoke about the handicap-accessibility at Whiteknact. Mr. Mutter will look into the alleged problem; possibly a doorbell can be installed to solve the problem.

A motion was made by Mr. Medeiros at 9:55 PM to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mrs. Morris. Vote 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia A. Iannelli, Executive Secretary

David A. Medeiros, Clerk of the Committee